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## NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

**SMALLPOX.**—It is cheering to note that the ravages of smallpox have greatly declined during the last hundred years. In 1802 a speaker in the British Parliament stated that 45,000 persons died annually of this disease in the United Kingdom alone. Lord Macaulay gave a graphic description of its terrors. In the United States in 1702 14.4 per cent of the population fell victims to it. In 1721 nearly 6,000 out of the 11,000 who then formed the population of Boston contracted the disease and 840 died of it.

**LIQUID PETROLEUM.**—This oil is in common use as a cathartic, or more properly a laxative, so that some suggestions made by a writer in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for giving it a distinctive flavor are of interest. For 500 c.c. of oil, 10 drops of anethol (the chief constituent of anise and fennel), 15 drops of oil of almond, 10 drops of oil of cloves, 5 drops of oil of cinnamon, 15 drops of oil of peppermint or spearmint, and 25 drops of methyl salicylate, wintergreen, may be used. He also recommended the oil combination used in flavoring aromatic elixir.

**CALORIC VALUE OF DAINTIES.**—In an editorial in the same journal, attention is called to the number of calories furnished by food eaten as a mere pastime. A single caramel, a nougatine, or a penny's worth of candy may furnish sufficient energy to supply the extra heat needed for walking a mile or more. Three medium sized olives can yield the amount of heat liberated in a half mile walk. The energy expended in climbing from the bottom to the top of Washington Monument may be completely replaced by the consumption of less than half a doughnut, six walnuts, five large olives or four pretzels. It is deducted that a constitutional walk is futile to combat the accumulating energy from undue eating between meals.

**TUBERCULOSIS.**—During a discussion at a meeting of the Delaware State Medical Society, it was said that a few simple things in the early diagnosis of tuberculosis are the slight rise of temperature in the evening, the increased pulse rate, and the stomach disturbances. When a child is suffering from malnutrition, has a slight fever, and is otherwise below par, the chances are 6 to 4 that tuberculosis is the cause. Rest in proportion to the severity and duration of the symptoms is the only specific treatment.

**POISON IVY.**—A physician states that if persons sensitive to

poison ivy and poison oak would wash the skin that has been exposed, with alcohol or gasoline, within an hour after exposure, they would escape the usual eruption.

**TYPHUS IN SERBIA.**—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* says the five-year campaign which American Red Cross physicians and nurses have been waging against typhus fever in Serbia has ended victoriously. The Serbian Commission states that there are only 65 cases in the country, two-thirds of these being in Belgrade. During 1915, 150,000 children died, out of a population of three million. 150 physicians died, so that there was left only one doctor to each 75,000 persons.

**EFFECT OF DIET ON SECOND TEETH.**—A writer in the *Pennsylvania Medical Journal* advises giving children food that will require chewing, as soon as the first teeth are through. Dry crusts of bread, toast, the coarser cereals, meat, and meat bones are mentioned. Later, green salad leaves, cooked celery, spinach, peas, cauliflower tops, asparagus tips, string beans and apples may be added.

**EXCESS OF PROTEIN AND BRIGHT'S DISEASE.**—A series of experiments on the effect of a high protein diet is reported in *Archives of Internal Medicine*. Rabbits fed on the whites of several eggs daily developed acute and subacute nephritis. When casein was given, 15gm. daily produced no ill effect, but when it was increased to 30gm. and the nitrogen metabolism was about three times normal, the kidneys were affected. Rabbits fed on soy beans for months had chronic nephritis and often died of it.

**METHOD OF MARKING THE SKIN.**—A correspondent of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* suggests that when it is necessary to make an outline on the skin, an easy method is to moisten the surface with water from a cotton sponge and then use an ordinary copying pencil. If the surface is to be kept sterile, the point of the pencil can be dipped in a concentrated solution of mercuric chloride. The mark is easily removed with soap and water, and can be photographed, but not very distinctly.

**THE INDUSTRIAL NURSE.**—It is said that the first instance of the employment of an industrial nurse was when the Vermont Marble Company engaged a nurse, in 1895, to visit the homes and care for the sick among the workers and their families.

**THE DISCOVERER OF RADIUM.**—Mme. Curie has returned to Warsaw, her native city, to occupy the chair of radiology in the university there.